

# State Representative Tom Saunders House District 54

## Legislative Survey



Dear Neighbor,

I would like to take this time to thank you for allowing me to represent you at the statehouse. The 115<sup>th</sup> General Assembly has already begun with a focus on progressive and innovative ideas for the future of Indiana.

In this newsletter you will find my legislative survey, which I hope you will take the time to complete so I will have a better understanding of issues and opinions important to you. Also included is a 12-point plan to help continue to move the state forward. The plan includes increasing educational opportunities for Indiana's youth, improving economic development in Indiana, and balancing the state's budget once again.

By listening to your comments and concerns, I can vote on legislation for the best interest of all those in Henry, Wayne, and Randolph Counties.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns regarding the upcoming session, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tom Saunders

*Rep. Saunders  
welcomes  
supporters during  
the groundbreaking  
in Richmond  
at the new  
interchange at US  
31 and I-70.*



### How to Contact State Rep. Tom Saunders

If you have a question regarding state government, there are three ways you can contact Rep. Saunders:

#### Mail

State Rep. Tom Saunders  
200 W. Washington  
Room 401  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

#### Telephone

(800) 382-9841

#### E-mail

H54@in.gov

### Fill Out This Survey Online!

Visit my website at  
**[www.in.gov/h54](http://www.in.gov/h54)**  
to complete this survey and send me  
additional comments.

# 12 Point Plan for Indiana's Progress

1. **Permanently Eliminate Taxpayer Funded Lifetime Healthcare Benefits** for House Members through legislation to be introduced in the 2007 legislative session. Last year, Republican Leader Brian Bosma eliminated the benefit administratively.
2. **Balance the 2008-09 State Budget** with no general tax increases, accounting gimmicks or dedicated fund transfers to artificially balance Indiana's books.
3. **Eliminate Partisan Gerrymandering** of Indiana's legislative and congressional districts for political gain by the party in control of the Indiana House at the end of each decade.
4. **Provide for Indiana's Energy Needs** with a focus on 'Hoosier Homegrown Energy' by making bio-diesel and ethanol more available to consumers, thus reducing the reliance on imported oil.
5. **Reform the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV)** by providing a 30-minute guarantee at the BMV and other measures to improve service and efficiency.
6. **Honor and Support Hoosier Veterans and Active Military** by increasing financial assistance to those who are serving today and their families, and honoring veterans for their service.
7. **Empower Indiana Schools** by providing more resources, more flexibility and more incentives for schools, teachers, parents, and students.
8. **Crack Down on Illegal Immigration** by broadening State Police powers to enforce federal immigration laws and ensuring that state benefits are awarded only to legal Indiana residents.
9. **Expand our Job Creation Success** and promote job growth in the small business sector where 75% of Hoosier jobs are created.
10. **Get Tough on Crime** by requiring violent felons to serve at least



Rep. Saunders takes time during Organization Day to welcome new legislators to office.

85% of their sentence, protecting children from

Internet sexual predators, requiring federal background checks on caregivers of the elderly, and protecting all Hoosiers from identity theft, violent offenders, and meth dealers.

11. **Help Access Affordable Healthcare** with common sense market based solutions like providing tax credits for Worksite Health Programs, a Health Insurance Premium Deduction, and allowing coverage by a parent's policy until the age of 24.

12. **Let Hoosiers Speak on Traditional Marriage** by voting in the 115<sup>th</sup> General Assembly on SJR7 – the amendment to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman – and placing SJR7 on a referendum ballot for Indiana voters to consider in November of 2008.

## Block Grants for Education

Many sweeping education reforms, such as full day kindergarten, have been discussed in Indiana over the last decade. In prior years, Indiana had no money to pay for these programs; however, because of the tight budget crafted by Indiana House legislators, Indiana now has a budget surplus and the ability to provide more education opportunities. Governor Daniels has placed the implementation of full day kindergarten as one of his legislative priorities this year.

While Indiana has a surplus, it does not have enough money to implement full day kindergarten for every student. Indiana House legislators are proposing to provide grants to schools so they can have a choice to offer full day kindergarten during a phase-in period or to fund a variety of other education programs.

The caucus believes in providing local school corporations with block grants so that they may determine how best to spend the money. Indiana House legislators are proposing that block grants be used to fund either optional full day kindergarten, alternative education, summer school programs, remediation, reading improvement, expansion of gifted and talented programs, professional development, technology, or textbooks. Local school boards understand the needs of the community more than someone sitting at a desk in Indianapolis. If a school believes that funding remediation programs is more important to the local area than full day kindergarten, they should be able to use the money to fund those programs. Local schools should determine how the money would best serve their needs.

House legislators will continue to provide the resources necessary for a quality education and allow local school corporations to choose how they will meet the education needs of their communities. House Republicans will work with Governor Daniels and other legislators to create a program that is affordable, meets the needs of local schools, and benefits Hoosier children.